

VZCZCXRO4174
RR RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM
DE RUEHJS #0049 2821003
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 091003Z OCT 07
FM AMCONSUL SURABAYA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0069
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 0061
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0002
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0013
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0001
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RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0002
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RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEHJS/AMCONSUL SURABAYA 0071

UNCLAS SURABAYA 000049

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS (COPE), EAP/RSP, DRL, IO
NSC FOR EPHU

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ID](#) [BM](#)

SUBJECT: INDONESIA AND BURMA: VIEWS FROM EAST JAVA

REF: JAKARTA 2799

11. Jakarta-based foreign policy watchers are not the only Indonesians closely monitoring events in Burma. Since the crisis erupted, the Surabaya-based daily Jawa Pos has published front-page reports, with color pictures, covering events inside Burma and international reaction and providing commentary. The Surya daily, associated with the Jakarta-based Kompas Group, has also carried factual reporting on events unfolding in Burma on its international pages. Both papers covered demonstrations by local activists calling for stronger ASEAN action.

12. Jawa Pos has been the most active, dispatching a team to cover the story from different angles and publishing these articles under the red headline "Myanmar Crisis." Journalist Kardono Setyorakhmadi has filed a series of reports from the Burmese-Thai border based on interviews with refugees and anti-junta activists. As part of this series of articles, published on the front page October 5, Kardono related the story of two activists who told him about the brutality of the junta and described prison conditions in Burma. The article was accompanied by a photo of a Burmese activist standing in front of photographs of people who had disappeared or been killed by the military junta.

13. On October 8, Jawa Pos published an editorial entitled, "Failure as the Center of ASEAN," criticizing Indonesia for failing to play a prominent political role in ASEAN and accusing Jakarta of being weak against the Burmese military junta. Quoting an opposition activist who fled to Thailand, the editorial laments that "Indonesia was able to become a democratic country through peaceful reform, but has failed to build on this success in Myanmar." The editorial states that, despite being a founding member of ASEAN and a member of the UN Security Council, Indonesia is weak and fails to play a leadership role in international fora regarding issues of peace and justice. The editorial criticizes Indonesia as a member of the Security Council for only issuing a condemnation of Burma, rather than passing a sanctions resolution.

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